

REPORT OF COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA)

I am happy to report on behalf of CASA of NH for the Town of Alton's Annual Town Report.

CASA of NH is a statewide, private and not-for-profit organization dedicated to recruiting, training and supervising volunteers who advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in New Hampshire's courts. Children who come to the attention of the courts as a result of abuse or neglect are required by federal and state law to have a guardian ad litem (GAL). Since 1989, CASA volunteers have effectively filled this role and have become a powerful voice for over 7,000 of New Hampshire children. Volunteers have the support of a dedicated staff person to help guide them through the complexities of these cases

Cases of child abuse and neglect involving children who live in Alton are heard at the Laconia Family Court. In FYE 2009, CASA of NH was appointed to 40 cases involving 75 abused and neglected children in Laconia Family Court. Alton children are counted in those numbers. CASA volunteers help ensure that children's needs are met and services provided to facilitate safe reunification with biological families when possible. In cases where reunification cannot take place, the CASA volunteer works to ensure that another safe and permanent home is located.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and especially the children that we serve, please accept our sincere gratitude to the Town of Alton's inclusion of CASA of NH in the 2009 budget in the amount \$500.

Sincerely,

Kathy Vachon
Director of Development